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# Residencies by Design: a study into co-designing future programs with museums

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This paper offers an advanced conceptualization of what the future of design residencies in museums could look like. It details two co-design workshops devised to engage with people who would be most affected by a new residency model: one was held with past residents and members of staff at the Design Museum in London; the other was held as an exploratory workshop with a diverse group of designers from or based in Scotland, together with members of staff from V&A Museum of Design Dundee. For both, the overall aim is the same: that the groups use human-centred design methods to ideate collective solutions for a future residency. By combining the propositions from these co-design workshops possible solutions (i.e. concept development) are further developed and described with emphasis given to how this can have wider relevance in design management and affiliated research.

Keywords: Museums; Residencies; Co-design; Concept Development

## Introduction

As the world changes, so do perceptions and this impacts on how individuals engage with each other, their environment and their experiences. The fast-paced changes in conceptualisations of individuality and society are slowly beginning to be reflected in the fabric of organizational systems. One need only consider the standard practices of museums to see this stasis at work. Within this sector, a reluctance to change is demonstrated in the transmission model of information, which is more commonly found than participatory engagement. As society becomes more familiar with the growing



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experience economy (Pine & Gilmore, 1999) and bespoke offerings pioneered by the commercial industry, so the *status quo* of cultural provision faces an increasing challenge.

Museums must take into consideration the value it provides to its primary stakeholders. This new position affects the way museums consider their offering to visitors and the public, *and* requires them to rethink their long-standing and mutually beneficial relationship with those working in the creative economy. Museums are positioning themselves as a site for research, development and production. This is exemplified by the rise of experimental spaces in internationally renowned museums, such as; New Inc at the New Museum in New York City, The Pavillon at Palais de Tokyo in Paris, and the Sackler Centre at the V&A. Museums have altered their offerings so that they are considered relevant to these new perceptions (Hooper-Greenhill, Miles & Zavala, 1994). This strategic shift has led to an accelerated development in the provision of public programmes which engage with creative professionals. Specifically, the notion and provision of residency programmes which have gained increasing attention over the past decade, as this method of involvement is perceived as critical to achieving the wider aims of the institution, while meeting government objectives of supporting the creative industries for economic growth.<sup>1</sup> These demonstrations of live-action creativity further strengthen the links between the growing economy and museums' strategies that aim at replacing products and services with engaging experiences (Bishop, 2004).

This study intends to demonstrate possible pathways towards an enriched understanding of design in this future context, illustrating how co-design may support organisational innovation and foresight in a new museum.

### **Foresight by Design: a museum perspective**

Designers are primarily concerned with what is possible, which forever drives the field towards finding better solutions to the problems of everyday life (Buchanan, 1998). This research aims to demonstrate how design research might be employed in the concept development phase for new products and services for an emerging museum. As Manzini (2016) asserts, '[b]efore being a technique, design is a capacity for critical analysis and reflection, with which design experts produce knowledge, visions, and quality criteria that can be made concrete in feasible proposals' (p. 54). This research seeks to identify the strategies involved in structuring a residency programme which supports the development of innovation in practice, both at an individual and organizational level. As an interdisciplinary project, it exploits the strength of design research: its belief that design is projective and powered by its ability to create new possible futures (Jonas, 2001; Krippendorff, 2006).

For this reason, developing a new programme has required innovation. It has been argued that design thinking is the shaping of ideas into practical propositions, leading to competitive advantage in the marketplace (Martin, 2009). Indeed, there has been a marked proliferation of the use of design thinking in a wide range of contexts beyond those considered to be traditional fields of design (Kimbell, 2011). This has filtered

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<sup>1</sup> This research contends that 'residency' denotes *the provision of time and resources to innovate in practice, subsequently resulting in new knowledge and/or objects, events or services from which the resident, participating individual and host organization can benefit.*

through to the creative economy, giving rise to a number of studies exploring design in the creation and development of products and services (Pisaki, 2007; 2010; Pitsaki & Rieple, 2011; Rieple & Pitsaki, 2011; Mitroff Silvers, Rogers & Wilson, 2013; Mitroff Silvers, Hamley, Trinh, Lytle-Painter, Ludden & Lee, 2014). With this, there is an opportunity to use the transformation in design theory to consider the way that the residency is perceived.

The objective of this research is to further interrogate and develop the concept of a design residency by considering its key audience: the design profession itself. It is to illustrate how the knowledge gleaned thus far is embedded into the next iteration of concept development: that is to say, 'a new model' of residency provision. This objective is realised by facilitating two co-design workshops with two British design museums, both world leaders in the cultural field, and both seeking to engage in the creation of new future design residencies. Co-designing a new model entails testing, building and projecting the concept of a design residency. This mode of concept development demands that in order to develop a vision of what a future residency can be, those who are affected by its consequences must be brought in at the phase in which initial design ideas are created.

### **Research Approach: co-design**

Co-design is used to generate ideas for a fourth model of residency provision, employed because it enables those who have the experience and knowledge on a specific subject to collectively inform, ideate, and conceptualize within the early stages of the design process (Sanders & Stappers, 2008). It attends to those who are on the receiving end of the design process to ensure their needs are met by the end product or service (Sanders & Stappers, 2012). Co-design is the approach used in the collective concept development of a future residency, and serves as the generative phase of the co-design process.

This research uses co-design to bring together professional designers with members of staff from the museums to becoming co-designers in forming the future provision of a design residency. It provides the means to collect and analyze the resulting rich and complex data. Since each industry partner approaches the notion of a future residency from a different perspective, it is necessary to design and analyze the workshops differently, and reflect the objectives of each accordingly.

### **Design(ing) Residencies for the Future: Design Museum**

The Design Museum's *Designer-in-Residence (DiR)* programme remains one of the only residencies devised for designers (specifically, recently graduated designers). In 2016, the Design Museum moved to a new home: the Commonwealth Institute in Kensington, London. For this relocation, it secured £20 million to renovate the existing building and tailor it to suit the needs of the organization. As part of the redesign of this building's interior, senior management chose to create an on-site residency studio embedded into the museum's permanent collection gallery. This change generated important moves, including the residency migrating from the Exhibitions Department to the Learning Department. This adjustment offered an organizational rethink of the programme. The changes, together with the shifting landscape of design, necessitated further consideration to determine how a design residency can be reframed to complement this new vista.

This workshop took place at the Design Museum Shad Thames building in November 2014. Workshop participants (n=12) included designers from previous and current years of the

DiR (n=4), as well as museum staff from the Learning (n=4) and Exhibitions and Collections departments (n=4). In support of a future dialogue, the author designed a series of tools to facilitate conversation and focus [Figures 1-4].

Drivers of change

Existing Strengths

Unknowns

Assumptions

Challenges or Problems

Disruptive innovation

Incremental improvement

Resident

Audience

What it offers

Design Museum

Resident

Audience

Enhancing outcomes/benefits

Design Museum

Resident

Audience

Available alternatives  
How is it different?

Design Museum

Resident

Audience

Useful  
Does it help us achieve something?

Design Museum

Resident

Audience

Well put together  
Is it a good use of resources & assets?

Design Museum

Resident

Audience

Valuable  
Is it enjoyable and/or meaningful?

Design Museum

Qualities

Source: amended from Kines and Juller 2012, Social design methods menu

Figure 1 Residency Proposition tool - Worksheet template. This tool enabled workshop participants to detail their needs and expectations for the new Designers in Residence programme. On the left hand-side, there are spaces to detail the drivers of change used as the initial point of concept development. Below, there

are spaces to allow the groups to consider the factors that create the context for the design residency.

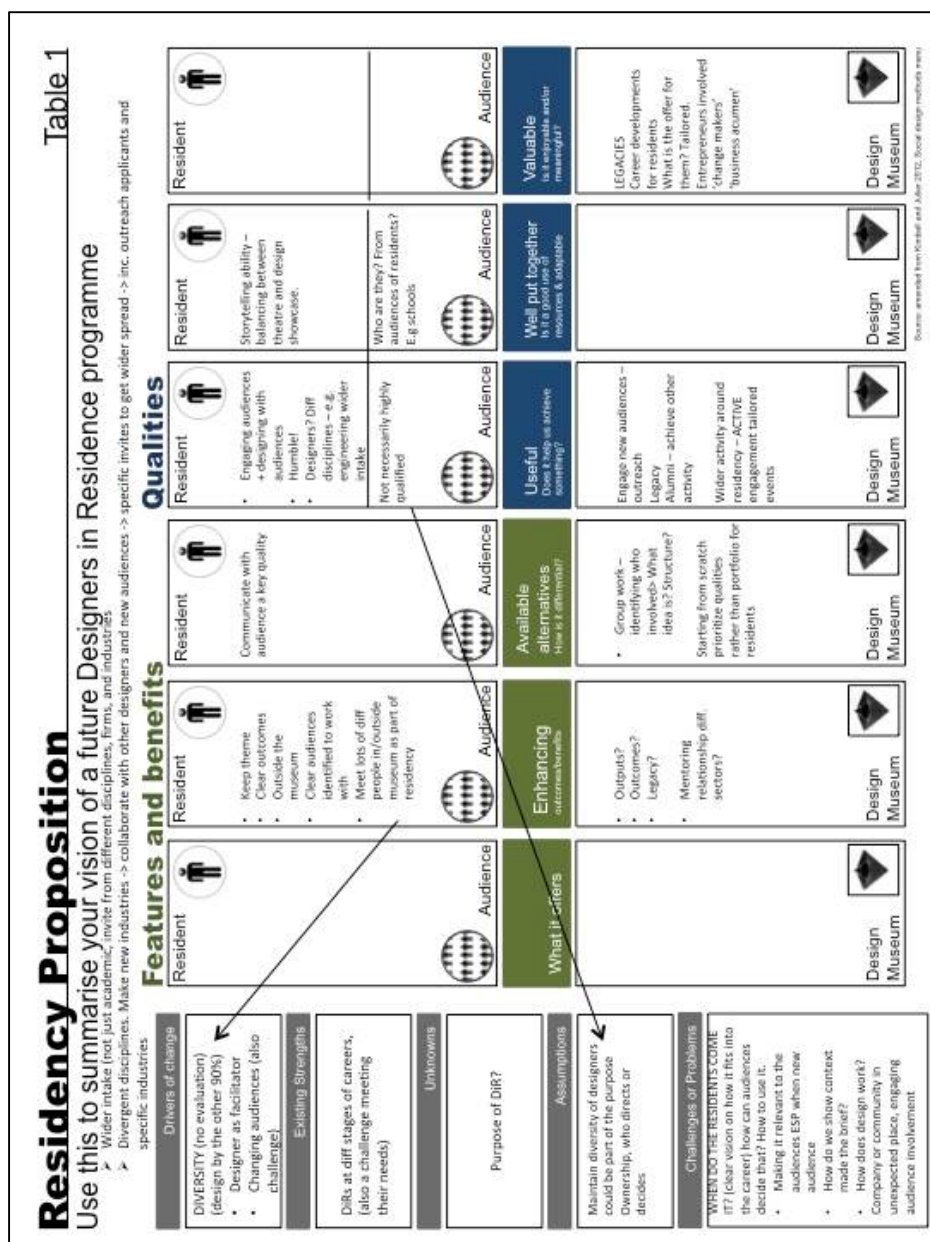


Figure 2 Residency Proposition tool – Roundtable Group 1.

# Residency Proposition

Use this to summarise your vision of a future Designers in Residence programme

Table 2

<b>Drivers of change</b>		<b>Qualities</b>		<b>Qualities</b>		<b>Qualities</b>		<b>Qualities</b>		<b>Qualities</b>	
<b>MOVE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change of architectural offer</li> <li>How will the change?</li> <li>Relationship with audiences</li> <li>DEPT SHIT</li> <li>Emphasis / priorities</li> <li>Link to collection and visitors</li> <li>ACE</li> <li>New work</li> <li>New Audiences</li> </ul>		<b>Existing Strengths</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contemporary designers in programme provides a balance between OLD + NEW</li> <li>High profile</li> <li>Change of curators to curate in live time</li> <li>Fresh perspective</li> </ul>		<b>Unknowns</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How the physical studio will work in new DM context</li> <li>Residents and outputs!</li> <li>Managing logistics</li> </ul>		<b>Assumptions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resident will be physically present onsite for majority of residency</li> <li>Public engagement integral</li> </ul>		<b>Challenges of Problems</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can there be flexibility with the model?</li> <li>Access xx of residents to wider audiences</li> <li>Opening to diverse practices</li> </ul>		<b>Disruptive Innovation</b> Incremental Improvement	
<b>Resident</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase ideas generation, decrease production?</li> <li>Access to museum and design networks?</li> <li>Direct contact with designers!</li> </ul>		<b>Resident</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaging at prototyping stage – testing ideas?</li> <li>Potential development support mentoring?</li> <li>Increased understanding of process of design</li> </ul>		<b>Resident</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Process – orientated</li> <li>Fit in with residents creative process</li> <li>Learning groups get fresh, real world inspiration</li> </ul>		<b>Resident</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Freshest talent for new work</li> <li>Inquisitive mind</li> <li>Interested, open to the new</li> </ul>		<b>Resident</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interest in collaborative experience + openness to public + learning audiences</li> </ul>		<b>Resident</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Energetic + flexible</li> <li>Resilience</li> </ul>	
<b>Audience</b>		<b>Audience</b>		<b>Audience</b>		<b>Audience</b>		<b>Audience</b>		<b>Audience</b>	
<b>What it offers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Making design process explicit to visitors (when appropriate)</li> <li>Rich context for learning – digital resources</li> <li>Studio space</li> <li>Connection to design ecology</li> </ul>		<b>Enhancing outcomes/benefits</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased opportunity for weekly crits and discussion your work-public?</li> <li>Wider range of 'mentors' / contacts something akin to a 'tutor' programme</li> <li>Professional engagement e.g. 'Bespoke that draws on cohort of specialists'</li> </ul>		<b>Available alternatives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take into account resident background to create a bespoke support programme</li> <li>With a background of regular public engagement e.g. open studio collectives, not just individuals</li> </ul>		<b>Useful</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhanced relationship to research programme</li> <li>Develop a 'tool box' to support documentation</li> <li>'Beit' as part of the outcomes – in the application of xx</li> <li>xx to the PCO?</li> </ul>		<b>Well put together</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How are residencies of value more broadly and other designers</li> <li>Proposal – about outcomes – how the proposal will take advantage of museum contacts e.g. networks, xx</li> </ul>		<b>Valuable</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Importance of final outputs and the designers for their portfolios</li> </ul>	
<b>Design Museum</b>		<b>Design Museum</b>		<b>Design Museum</b>		<b>Design Museum</b>		<b>Design Museum</b>		<b>Design Museum</b>	

Source: amended from Kestel and Juller 2012, Social design methods v.1.1

Studio creative practice / critiques / professional side / financial advisers etc

Figure 3 Residency Proposition tool – Roundtable Group 2.

# Residency Proposition

Table 3

<b>Drivers of change</b>	<b>Existing Strengths</b>	<b>Unknowns</b>	<b>Assumptions</b>	<b>Challenges or Problems</b>	<b>Disruptive innovation</b>
DIR embedded in/at the museum context: Show interactive live space Changing audience role -> Drive for more + different types of participation and influence on residency	Insight in to possibilities / current practice	Framework for managing relations and expectations Role of design and designers DIR – Skills need to communicate with audiences	Established designers won't be will to 'bare all'	Come to the zoo and see the designers	Incremental improvement

<b>Who is this residency for?</b>	<b>Research / res. vs design res.</b>	<b>Current programmes emerging</b>	<b>Emerging designer</b>	<b>Social science researcher</b>	<b>Established designer</b>	<b>Company?</b>
<b>Features and benefits</b>						
<b>Module 1</b> Audience-led organization, brief-setting <b>In space</b> Residency co-creation (event) Put out 'open xx' collect. Brief.	<b>Module 2</b> D's submit application -> opportunities for audiences What happens vs what happens when/ if	<b>Module 3</b> Client meeting/s resident + DM (+other stakeholders -> committee? -> audience Audience generated brief	<b>Module 4</b> Development research Prototyping ideas Transparency of process for audience Skills exchange / 'market' with skills	<b>Module 5</b> Production -> prototyping solutions and products D. Working in the space? • How much of the time? • Programmed in?	<b>Resident</b> PhD design / design resident student Resident to 'feel' and 'act as' part of the museum and its community	<b>Valuable</b> Is it valuable and/or meaningful?
<b>What it offers</b>	<b>Enhancing outcomes/benefits</b>	<b>Available alternatives</b> How is it different?	<b>Useful</b> Does it help us achieve something?	<b>Well put together</b> Is it a good use of resources & suitable		
Staff and audience are committee for designing	New Knowledge and practices are generated	Communicative value of design more efficiently and holistically Part of conversations instead of driver	Industry partners Co-creation days / events (public programme)	Sharing the good the bad and the ugly Skills + context Not about the genius design (more confident in design rather than art)		
Design Museum	Design Museum	Design Museum	Design Museum	Design Museum	Design Museum	Design Museum
<b>Qualities</b>						

Source: amended from Koolhaas and Juul 2012, Social design includes many

Figure 4 Residency Proposition Tool – Roundtable Group 3.



### *Design(ing) Residencies for the Future: Discussion*

Discussion was highly concerned with the transformative context of design: co-designers considered the representation of design to be moving away from the object, and the implications this would have on a residency programme. It focused on learning and the ways a new design residency could demonstrate process and engage with the museums visitors. It also examined the process, and formed a new framework for the design residency which reflects the design process: co-designers considered how this could be flexible to allow for different levels of audience engagement and various kinds of projects. However, there were three overarching themes in all groups: the role of the audience, new design disciplines and exposing the process.<sup>2</sup> The following discussion examines each in more detail.

#### *Role of the Audience*

To meet the strategic objectives of the museum, there is a need for the public to have a more significant role in the *DiR*. The groups considered at which points audiences could be engaged, what an innovative course of action would look like and how the audience could have a stronger impact on the resident and residency outcomes. The preliminary residency development stage could be audience-led, it was suggested, and new stakeholders or target groups could be involved in this process. One group proposed the public be brought into the initial stages of the process, aiding development of the residency brief through open events held in the residency studio [Figure 1]. Aligning *DiR* closer to the existing programme, the audience could play a more significant role in the selection process. Another possibility is to have a selected community define a 'real-world' challenge as well as the prospective designers' pitch, potentially resulting in a buy-in from new audiences. Audience-as-client was considered for the duration of the *DiR* programme. Responding to the reality that audience(s) become more involved once the designer inhabits a residency studio, the co-designers deemed the resident be open to engaging and working with members of the public [Figure 3]. This is noteworthy, as this 'collaborative' mind-set reflects the foregrounding of learning and engagement provision taking place as the Museum prepares to move to its new location.

#### *New Design Disciplines*

Here, discussed centred on complex ideas about how changes in design and shifting definitions of 'designers' could influence a new *DiR* model. Co-designers examined the traditional residency models which cater for traditional design education and traditional design, the kind of processes which exclude 'design for the other 90%',<sup>3</sup> and discussed how, or if, future *DiR* programmes should work around that. An alternative view on the residency was proposed: to recruit a practitioner not trained through normal pathways of design education, but brought other professions into the equation (e.g. engineer,

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<sup>2</sup> These themes were collectively arrived at during the final phase of the workshop which incorporated group presentations, further discussion and comparative analysis of the group's discoveries through the Residency Proposition tool amongst all the participants.

<sup>3</sup> This is a reference to the Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian National Design Museum 2010 exhibition *Design for the Other 90%*, which explored 'the growing movement to design low-cost solutions for those not traditionally served by professional designers' (source: [www.nationalgeographic.com/exhibits/2010/04/28/design-other-90/](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/exhibits/2010/04/28/design-other-90/)).

entrepreneur, or even a company) who use a process of design thinking in their approach [Figure 2]. This conceptual model of a collaborative residency would expose the cross-disciplinary nature of design. The designer could take on the role of the facilitator, thereby using the residency programme to interrogate the traditional view of the designer as 'creative genius'.

### *Exposing the Process*

As the Design Museum's *DiR* programme prepares to strategically move from Exhibitions to Learning, there comes an increased focus to showcase the design process. This raises questions about the future of the programme, some of which can be posed here: firstly, how does the Museum show the process of the design residency? How does it feed into the research community? How can the museum expose the complexity of the design process so that it is clear to visitors? And with emergent disciplines and more traditional processes, what really happens in a design studio, and how can this be displayed in an interesting and informative way? This provides a new perspective from which to discuss the design process, particularly of key concepts that designers must negotiate on a daily basis - for instance, responding to a brief, or working collaboratively with other designers, non-designers and clients.

The physical ramifications of a residency studio embedded in the museum is perceived to change the way design process can be communicated to visitors. There are real benefits to a studio in the heart of London, and the exposition of work to half a million people [Figure 3]. Certainly, the exposure offered to residents in the new design studio will influence the way the design process is communicated to the public, but how it attracts designers to apply, since this forward-facing role will impact the designer's experience of the residency.

### *Designers-in-Residence Concept Development*

A new approach to the structure of the *DiR* programme was devised based on modules which represented learning outcomes for the Design Museum, the resident and the visitors. Module One is where the brief is set: normally, this is the task of the Design Museum, but their idea for a new approach would use co-creation with the audience or specific community to develop the brief. This approach could possibly deepen these stakeholders' engagement and offer a different perspective on public programming. Module Two is where the proposal would be submitted, and perhaps would be assessed by some of the initial external partners. Module Three would be the negotiating phase, where brief and proposal are merged and the residency is formed. Module Four is the R&D phase, where new ideas are formed and iterated through prototyping. This would be the phase where the designers' process would be revealed through learning and engagement activities with the public. Module Five is for final stage prototyping and the production of solutions [Figure 4]. This staged development of the residency would allow the *DiR* to emulate the phases between R&D to production. However, it also encourages the resident and Design Museum to critique and question some of the assumptions associated with design: this would encompass important aspects of design, like the brief, and negotiating with clients, suppliers and sponsors, which often goes unquestioned by industry.

One idea was to expose the value of 'the brief', revealing how it is generated (perhaps using a workshop method with audience groups to unpack it as a concept while simultaneously engaging with museum audiences), or to reveal the collective side of design in a creative way, like allowing the resident(s) access to work with the curatorial

team [Figure 4]. Another idea was to pair the role of a designer to the Design Museum's role in a cultural context, to unpack some of the larger questions for future design practice. Interestingly, this five-stage process reflects the way the design process is communicated in industry, with a strong focus on forming the problem through co-design at the initial stage of the residency, which would result in a design brief, after which the resident designer would develop the solutions at two later stages: prototyping and design development.

Having discussed the main ideas that arose during the Design Museum workshop, the next section examines the workshop conducted in partnership with V&A Dundee.

### Residency Workshop: V&A Museum of Design Dundee

V&A Dundee aims to be an international centre for design by celebrating and displaying Scotland's past and present achievements, both in its rich design heritage and iconic contemporary design. One objective of this overarching aim is to develop a new and innovative residency model as part of its Design-Led Business Innovation programme (DLBI). It seeks to have a residency programme that will encourage creative professionals to be strategic, have a better understanding of their own skills, and work collaboratively with businesses to engage in the process of design.



**Figure 5** Discussion tool. Topics for discussion were devised in the initial phase of the workshop. The co-designers broke off and self-selected a topic to engage in further discussion. The worksheets were placed on each table to aid in documenting the discussions. After the table discussions had taken place, a full-room discussion took place in which ideas were further debated and possible solutions put forward. Badges to represent all the important elements discovered in previous research were introduced so that participants could decide where these would fit in a new model. © Colin Tennant



### *What is the value proposition of being a V&A Dundee resident?*

How will the Dundee model be different from the London model? The main comparison is V&A Dundee will not hold a permanent collection to which residents can respond. And though the models will be different, there is desire for the two institutions to collaborate. With this in mind, the relationship between the wider programme of V&A Dundee and the residency was raised as a way of combining some of the larger projects and strategic aims of the organization, including the Museum launch. It was proposed the residency could have a relationship with the wider programme of exhibitions and events, and to the DLBI programme. This implies design-related concepts (like design thinking) could be embedded into the residency, and the residency be employed as a mechanism for organisations to invest in design and designers.



*Figure 8 Capturing discussion on a new design residency. A participant takes notes from the discussion and captures it on a workshop sheet. © Colin Tennant*

Considering the residency in regards to design thinking was seen as equally beneficial to the institution. In particular, hosting a designer to work in-house and engage with visitors could differentiate V&A Dundee's offering to visitors who wished to understand more about the design process. This type of audience engagement could be considered in marketing terms a 'unique selling point' (USP) for the Museum. The residency programme could be interwoven into the wider narrative of the Museum's 'story' by its inclusion in the overall agenda of the organization.

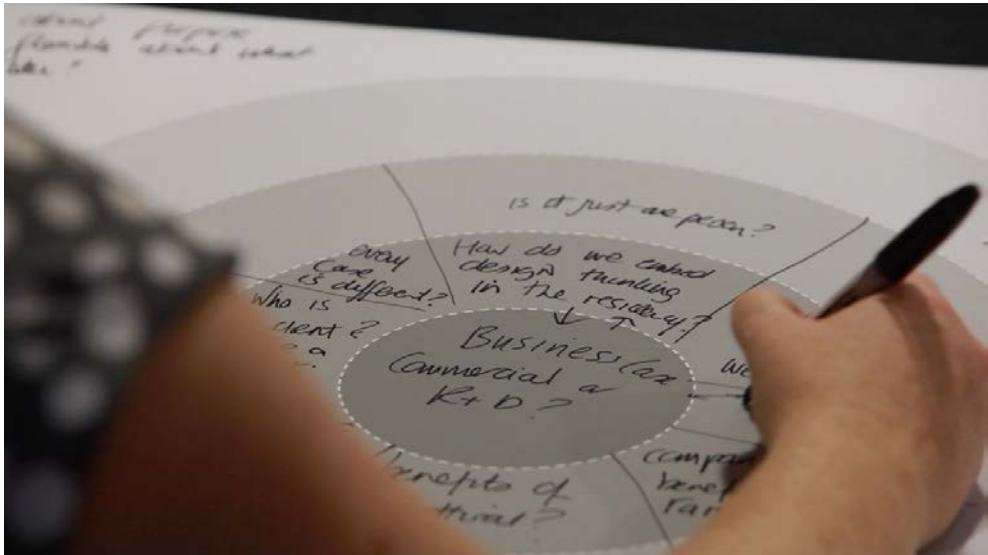


Figure 9 A Business Case for the Design Residency: One group discussed how a new design residency would require a business case to be articulated in their own organizations so that directors, board members and other staff would 'buy into' the idea of participating in a design residency. This discussion was captured using the workshop tool and audio recording. © Colin Tennant

It was perceived as vital for designers (who run their own business) to make a good 'business case' for doing a residency at V&A Dundee [Figure 9]. In order to do so, importance would be placed on being able to remove oneself from the daily routine of managing a business; otherwise, the residency would not offer the same opportunity for development. A residency also offers design professionals a chance to escape the pressure of the business world and return to the creative practice of designing.

*It interests me what you were saying about a commercial sensibility and making a business case to your company, but the other side of that is [that] I always view residencies as an opportunity to step outside the commercial realm. As a creative, we have a very aggressive regime of getting up in the morning and making stuff all day, and it is a total chance to have the opportunity to reflect. What a successful residency is to me is having that opportunity to reflect on research. (VAP06)*

These core values must work with each other and become the foundation for a new residency programme with limitless potential at V&A Dundee. This idea is the rationale for considering the democratisation of elements in the concept development, as this demonstrates there is a need to consider how the expectations and values of each stakeholder will shift and transform with each new manifestation of residency.

### *Design Residency Concept Development*

A new design residency can be adapted to the needs and ambition of each specific project, and tailored to the requirements of its various stakeholders. What is crucial is V&A Dundee is open to taking risks and prototyping different models.



### *A Company-in-Residence*

A Company-in-Residence<sup>4</sup> programme could answer the demand for a business case for the residency. Having a full company in residence is an opportunity for all staff members to experiment collaboratively on new ideas, and innovate as a group rather than as an individual. However, this does not come without its challenges: namely, the six-month residency period (which is standard practice for the V&A), which would mean that staff would be expected, but be unable, to leave their business for the duration of the residency, since demands placed on them by the company would mean they have client projects to deliver.

*The thing about the six-month format is that if you have a handful of clients that are all expecting to be able to phone you and request work, and for six months, I wouldn't necessarily be able to not respond. But that could maybe be part of the residency, but we couldn't do that because we have issues with confidentiality. (VAP05)*



Figure 10 *Exchanging values and expectations. A workshop participant discusses the difference between the values and expectations of the Museum and professional designers with the Head of Learning and Innovation at V&A Dundee. © Colin Tennant*

Furthermore, some companies would struggle to move their practice into the museum due to confidentiality issues. However, having a company residency where the residency

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<sup>4</sup> This notion of a company-in-residence is not dissimilar to Stefan Sagmeister's tenet of a year-long sabbatical every seven years, or as he describes '[s]even years of work (with plenty of living) vs. one year of living (with plenty of work)' (SagmeisterWalsh website, [www.sagmeisterwalsh.com](http://www.sagmeisterwalsh.com)). Sagmeister himself takes a full year out-of-office sabbatical and relocates to a studio in Bali, where he dedicates his time to the research and development of his own ideas and design passions.

fee was paid to the company (rather than an individual) could allow company staff members to take turns being a resident at the Museum.

*I've never seen a residency programme that is open to companies, at least not in this country, and I find that interesting. As long as the fee is enough to cover one person in terms of project time in running a company, I think it would be an interesting exercise in how you would share that in the team. (VAP01)*

It was determined that those who are critical to powering the company should be singled out for a residency to give them the inspiration and drive to continue to do so.

V&A Dundee is potentially considering using a six-month timescale as standard. However, this period seemed to be at odds with the way design professionals work, especially those with businesses. Indeed, six months in industrial design is far too lengthy a timescale when considering the concept development of a product [Figure 10].

*We've never done a project that was six months: that's a long time in industrial design and product design. If you are working with a slow company, it might take two years to get the product to the shops, but you're working in a concept stage for a week to ten days, and that's that. So the idea of doing one thing for six months sounds to me like a long time. I think it is an interesting prospect, but I wonder what the actual day-to-day endeavour would be. (VAP06)*

As mentioned above in the 'Company-in-Residence' section, a few participants also expressed concerns over how this would impact the practice of the designer or firm, as regular clients might not be able to wait for a long period for deliverables.

### **Recruitment Process**

In addition to new concept models, there was discussion on the practical considerations of a design-specific residency and how it should mirror the nature of design and design practice: for instance, resident selection based on previous achievements would lay the foundation for what type of residency model is used.

The discussion also questioned whether, in order to promote the programme's notoriety in the first instance, an internationally recognised individual should be selected for the pre-opening residency programme as a means to bring recognition to V&A Dundee as the building starts to take shape:

*In starting up, should the first resident be invited because they are established, and could be the ambassador of the development of V&A Dundee and increase awareness of the project? (VAP01)*

Having a resident in place before the opening who is interested in social innovation and its potential impact on the Museum's development could assist in getting the wider community involved. Engagement of this kind could raise awareness and the feeling of inclusivity for the Museum's local communities.

*[The aim is to] bring the city on board for the bigger journey that is ahead. Something that really engages the people of Dundee, and might help those who would otherwise be unconvinced by it, [someone who] understands what it [the project] is all about. (VAP09)*



Furthermore, the recruitment process could be more aligned to the design industry, which uses briefs, portfolios, pitching and discussions to develop projects.

### *Collaboration*

Collaboration is a critical part of a design residency. The selection of a design resident is also a selection of that designer's network. However, the residency would also broaden the resident's network, as well as that of the organization. The notion of collaboration could play a key role, with an emphasis on securing national and international mentorship projects which would enhance the networks of both the resident and the organization. In addition, mentorship is equated with collaboration, and working with an established international creative practitioner could enhance the reputation of the resident and the development of their practice.

*Games design is a really collaborative process. So, if it was just me in residence, you would only get a slice of what we are able to deliver.*

*Collaboration is a really important part of our process. Something else that you would have to consider specific to games design is that we are such a young media, so I would like to have some mentorship and to connect to people within games design, and I think the V&A [Dundee] can facilitate that. (VAP08)*

In addition to one-to-one support, having mixer events where designers could meet possible collaborators and then pitch for the residency together is another possible route for collaboration. This notion stems from the current trend in similar events, such as design jams or hack-a-thons, which promote collaborative working [Figure 11].



**Figure 11** *Residency workshop discussion on potential collaboration. A group discuss the potential framework for collaboration within a future design residency. © Colin Tennant*

For those designers working primarily in commercial businesses, the notion of public engagement is not at the forefront of their decision-making process. However, public engagement can be a core part of launching the building into the community:

*Instead of focusing on something inside the museum, perhaps you can focus on this emerging heart of the city. Which is quite an unusual position to be put into... maybe respond to that in some way, and intervene in a really big way. (VAP04)*

This idea of building the Museum ethos through the residency programme resonates well with the notion of embedding the residency into the fabric of the Museum. This thought was considered further by one participant:

*It's contributing to the fabric of the Museum, and if you are building the Museum, the opportunity for Scottish designers to contribute to that factor is an opportunity that only comes along when you build one [...]. The format for that wouldn't necessarily be under the same funding structure because you wouldn't have the same overheads; it could be a remote process. (VAP05)*

Following this analysis of both workshops, a comparative examination was conducted to analyze the ideas uncovered in each. The concepts highlighted by this comparison are discussed in the next section.

## **Overall Reflections**

Between the two workshops, there was a noted discrepancy in the perceived need or willingness for the residency to have a strong engagement focus. The Design Museum co-designers believed that audience engagement was crucial, and considered ways in which the audience could collaborate throughout a full residency cycle. However, this emphasis could be due to the presence of a higher percentage of Museum staff (particularly from the Learning Department) participating in the Design Museum workshop. Indeed, the co-designers at the V&A Dundee workshop did not perceive audience to be a high priority: in fact, it could be concluded from some of the issues the designers raised on intellectual property that audience involvement might be unsuitable for some practices. However, this skew could equally stem from the higher number of practicing professional designers engaged in the V&A Dundee workshop, who were more aware and concerned about the notion of continuing their business while undertaking the residency.

These differing opinions are important to highlight, as it could be deduced that this strong interest in engagement and the ideas stemming from the Design Museum workshop as a whole were perhaps more representative of the anticipated value of a residency from the Museum's perspective. On the other hand, the higher number of established professional designers from the workshop in Dundee demonstrates the opinions of designers who are contributing to the existing design industry in Scotland. It must be noted that, given the small number of participants in the Dundee workshop, it would be unwise to generalize this finding to the whole design industry in Scotland, yet these sessions do give insight into individual perceptions of what some of the designers V&A Dundee might be targeting would hope to gain from undertaking a residency. Therefore, comparing the two reveals a possible tension between what is understood as valuable by the Museum sector and what professional designers deem as such.

There were other distinctions observed between the general viewpoints of the workshops participants, and these are equally important to disclose. Most significantly, the participants of the V&A Dundee workshop were more pragmatic about what the possible solutions of a new residency could be. This is a useful aspect of the co-design process, demonstrating as it does the generation of ideas in a real-world context, even if these are being projected into a future context. The participants spoke about the recruitment process, and how this process could reflect the way design is procured in industry: through briefing, negotiation and collaborative development between the resident and the Museum.

On the other hand, the Design Museum workshop participants were keen to explore how the residency procurement process could be more aligned to what exists in industry, but believed this emulation should be used as a method to interrogate some of the elements of briefing that go unquestioned by industry. In academia, research has already begun this critical discourse by examining how the changing design landscape has resulted in a significant shift in the relationship between the 'client' and the designer in contemporary practice, and processes for procurement need to reflect these vital opportunities for knowledge exchange (Murphy & Press, 2007). Equally, there is growing consensus that design problems and solutions should be developed collectively and actively over the full span of the design process (Murphy & Hands, 2012). As such, there is scope for a future design residency to question some of these challenges already facing the design industry. The notion of using the residency to question the design industry can be expanded beyond the procurement process. The residency is a platform to develop a new design concept, with the potential to effect changes in design at a broader level. If the residency is to have a focus on demonstrating process, it could be perfectly positioned to examine some of the more intangible aspects of design, such as design thinking, a shift towards a more collaborative way of working, or design 'for the other 90%'.

Critical to all three propositions of design residency created during the Design Museum workshop is that none of these necessarily put the designer at the centre of the design process. This has implications of eligibility for the new residency, as it could incorporate individuals or a collective who use design thinking in their ventures, yet are not classified as being in traditional 'design' roles. In this case, as the designer is not central and is considered to be on a par with other elements in the model, this allows for an expanded interpretation of who can become a 'design resident', and what the role of design is within the residency. From the museum's perspective, this expanded understanding of whom the residency is 'for' is precarious, as the institution will need to build a reputation around the residency programme so as to attract international recognition of its advancements as a cultural institution in the development of design. This will require an open-mindedness to the residency programme, and finding a balance between the needs of design professionals and the industry, which is currently not the case for most residency programmes. As a result, this area of inquiry - which can be posed in question form as 'Is there a boundary for design in the residency programme?' - will be a continuing consideration.

## Closing Remarks

The co-design workshops provided the opportunity for designers and those working in design museums to discuss propositions for a new residency model. The residency programme was examined from two perspectives: one already in existence, and one in the concept phase. The first workshop was centred on the existing Design Museum, which has had a residency programme for over five years, and has developed an existing programme. The second session was focused on a new organisation, V&A Dundee, which seeks to respond to the current landscape and develop something 'from scratch' to provide a unique offering to the design industry, as well as create an evocative cultural programme which can question what it means to have a design residency today. The analysis of findings from these two workshops allowed for further concept development in to how to understand and develop a future residency programme. However, these possible solutions exist only as ideas, and were formulated into a theoretical framework which is embedded in the philosophy of design as part of a full PhD thesis (Coulson, 2016). More research is needed into the development and execution of both programs.

Finally, this research contributes to a growing appreciation as to how design encompasses the subject of what a museum communicates to its audiences, how it communicates that information, a way to think about the way in which exhibitions are curated. It backs a wider argument, which believes that not only is design a way to frame knowledge relating to the development of cultural products and services, it provides an approach to the strategic management of cultural institutions.

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